

Message Text

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17

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAJ-01 IO-13 OMB-01 /083 W

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R 130546Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7005

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USLO PEKING

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 2184

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR SOPN LA CH US

SUBJECT: LAO NEWSPAPER REPORTS PRESIDENT FORD'S CONDOLENCES
ON MAO DEATH

REF VIENTIANE 2175

1. LAO VERNACULAR NEWSPAPER "VIENTIANE MAI" SEPTEMBER 11
CARRIED BRIEF SQUIB IN PAGE TWO NEWS IN BRIEF COLUMN REPORTING
THAT PRESIDENT FORD HAD PRAISED CHAIRMAN MAO, SAYING THAT HE
WAS A GREAT MAN IN HISTORY AND THAT AMERICAN PEOPLE WOULD
NEVER FORGET THAT, BECAUSE OF MAO, CHINA AND AMERICA HAD STOPPED
BEING ENEMIES.

2. SQUIB ON PRESIDENT'S CONDOLENCES WAS CARRIED THIRD IN NEWS
IN BRIEF COLUMN. FIRST ITEM REPORTED THAT CHINESE AND PRO-
GRESSIVE PEACE-LOVING PEOPLES EXPRESSED SORROW AT MAO DEATH AND
SECOND ITEM REPORTED MESSAGE OF CONDOLENCES FROM LAO LEADERS.
AFTER ITEM ON PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT, NEXT ITEM MENTIONED PRESIDENT
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GISCARD'S STATEMENT ON MAO DEATH.

3. COMMENT: THIS IS THE FIRST LAO PRESS ITEM WE HAVE NOTICED IN SEVERAL MONTHS REPORTING ANY NEWS FROM THE U.S. STRAIGHT, MUCH LESS FAVORABLY. PRESUMABLY "VIENTIANE MAI" PICKED UP THE REPORT FROM THE ACCOUNT OF THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT IN THE USIS DAILY BULLETIN OF THE PREVIOUS DAY, SEPTEMBER 10, WHICH WAS SENT TO "VIENTIANE MAI", AS IT IS REGULARLY.

4. "VIENTIANE MAI" IS THE ONLY SUPPOSEDLY PRIVATE DAILY PAPER APPEARING IN VIENTIANE. IT IS PUBLISHED NEITHER BY THE GOVERNMENT NOR THE PARTY, ALTHOUGH IT REGULARLY FOLLOWS THE PARTY LINE AND IN A COMMUNIST COUNTRY PRESUMABLY IS CLOSELY CONTROLLED.

5. INTERESTINGLY, ON SEPTEMBER 9, THE PRIVATE OFFICE WHICH TRANSLATES THE VERNACULAR PRESS INTO FRENCH FOR THE BENEFIT OF FOREIGNERS REPORTED THAT THE SEPTEMBER 9 ISSUE OF "VIENTIANE MAI" HAD BEEN RECALLED FROM DISTRIBUTION. NO EXPLANATION WAS GIVEN, AND WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO OBTAIN ONE.

6. THE STRAIGHT REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT, COMPARED TO THE USUAL CRITICISMS OF THE U.S. TAKEN FROM TASS, COULD CONCEIVABLY GET "VIENTIANE MAI" IN TROUBLE AGAIN.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS RELEASES, CONDOLENCE MESSAGES, NEWSPAPERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: BoyleJA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976VIENTI02184
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760344-0471
From: VIENTIANE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760965/aaaacdkd.tel
Line Count: 85
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 VIENTIANE 2175
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: BoyleJA
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <22 APR 2004 by CollinP0>; APPROVED <16 AUG 2004 by BoyleJA>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LAO NEWSPAPER REPORTS PRESIDENT FORD'S CONDOLENCES ON MAO DEATH
TAGS: PFOR, SOPN, LA, CH, US, (FORD, GERALD R), (MAO TSE TUNG)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006